

**APPROVED**  
**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**September 12, 2005 at 4:00 P.M.**  
**City of Fort Lauderdale**  
**100 North Andrews Avenue**  
**8<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room**

<b>Economic Development Advisory Board</b>	<b>Current Meeting</b>	<b>Cumulative Attendance</b>	
<b><u>MEMBERS</u></b>		<b><u>Present</u></b>	<b><u>Absent</u></b>
Robert Boyd	P	1	0
Mark Budwig	P	1	0
Bill Burrington	P	1	0
Pat DuMont, Chair	P	1	0
Ruchel Louis, Vice Chair	P	1	0
Michael F. McGinn	A	0	1
Cort Neimark	P	1	0
Tim Schiavone	P	1	0
Gerrie Washington	A	0	1
Gwen Watson	A	0	1
Lisa Zelch	A	0	1
<b>Total Members Present</b>	<b>7</b>		

**Staff**

Bob LaMattina, Beach Community Redevelopment Agency Director  
Ann Kelleher, Assistant to the City Manager  
Ron Hicks, Economic Development Director  
Earl Prizlee, Project Engineer  
Leslie Carhart, Staff Liaison  
Jamie Oppерlee, Recording Clerk

**Guests**

Brad Wechsler, Par Steel Shelving Company

**I. Call to Order**

Chair DuMont called the meeting to order at 4:06 p.m.

Board members, City staff and guests introduced themselves in turn.

**II. Roll Call**

Ms. Opperlee then took roll call.

**III. Approval of April, May, August & November 2004 Minutes**

**Motion** made by Mr. Burrington and seconded by Ms. Louis to approve the April, May, August and November 2004 minutes. Board unanimously approved.

**IV. Introduction of new Economic Development Director**

Mr. Hicks stated that he was recruited by the City Manager in April. He was formerly employed at Empire State Development, which was the New York State government's Economic Development Agency.

Mr. Hicks said the City Manager had charged him to:

- Establish a true Economic Development and economic incentive program;
- Set up a City real estate office;
- Create a Business Improvement District;
- Oversee the Community Redevelopment Agencies;
- Foster better relationships with the state and county;

Mr. Hicks felt that Valerie Bohlander, head of the Building Department, understood the importance of a Building Department being responsive, accurate and consistent. They had recently held their first pre-construction meeting to address some of the issues they faced with Kaplan University, and all department representatives had been in agreement about the project.

Mr. Hicks said they were also looking for internal and external rapid response teams. He wanted to create a team comprising business people who would support project proposals when they were put before the City Commission.

Mr. Hicks, City Manager Gretsas and Ms. Bohlander intended to examine the City's code and consider what they felt was necessary and what might not be.

Mr. Hicks stated that the department was looking at streetscaping and skyscaping and quality of life issues. Mr. Hicks felt it very important to find out from the Economic Development Advisory Board where they wanted the City to go and asked for their input.

Mr. Hicks announced that Leslie Carhart would be liaison to the County Film Commission full time.

**V. Introduction of Beach Community Redevelopment Agency Director**

Mr. Hicks noted that City Manager Gretsas wanted Fort Lauderdale's beach to be four or five-star and felt it was now a three-star. Mr. Hicks felt everyone should feel welcome to the beach. He noted that one of his pet peeves was cigarette butt and bottle cap litter on the beach that was not effectively removed by the equipment currently used. He was working to get the cleanup staff to utilize finer sifting equipment to get this smaller debris off the beach.

Mr. Hicks then introduced Bob LaMattina, the new Beach Community Redevelopment Agency Director. Mr. LaMattina stated he had been doing a lot of research since he arrived. He had visited the beach with Mr. Prizlee and was assessing possible improvements and quality of life issues.

Mr. LaMattina stated he had formerly worked for Malcolm Forbes, the Ford foundation, Goldman Sachs, and most recently the Oklahoma school rebuilding project. Mr. LaMattina said the working relationship among City staff was very cordial and felt they could all share ideas freely.

Mr. LaMattina said they had looked at the finance situation and modified the budget to see “where we are, where we’ve been and where we’re going.” They were developing a five-year plan and had many ideas for streetscape.

#### **VI. Introduction of Grants Manager**

Ms. Kelleher stated she was Assistant to the City Manager and her primary responsibilities were grants administration and legislative affairs. She noted that monitoring legislation and establishing good relationships with federal and state legislative offices was important to getting grants through the system and getting power behind them. She explained that grants were the means by which state and federal appropriations were delivered to municipalities.

Ms. Kelleher pointed out that the City had been quite successful in securing grants in the past, but the goal was now to increase those efforts and target them more specifically. The City also wanted to be more closely aligned with state and federal legislators and be more aware of legislation that would eventually impact the City.

Ms. Kelleher announced that she had created an RFP for a state lobbyist and the City Commission had authorized them to do the same for a federal lobbyist.

#### **VII. Introduction of Project Engineer**

Mr. Prizlee needed to leave the meeting early.

#### **VIII. Discussion of Board’s Direction**

Chair DuMont asked Mr. Hicks to tell them what the budget overview was for Economic Development. Mr. Hicks said this was a “status quo” budget and only the real estate position had been added. He offered to get the Board a copy of the current and future budgets for them to examine.

Mr. Hicks described three projects the Economic Development Department had worked on:

- The Business Improvement District for the beach;
- The Kaplan University project;

- Expediting the permit process

Mr. Hicks stated that Jim Carras was providing them with information to create the Business Improvement District on the beach and they hoped to take this to the City Commission in October.

Mr. Hicks explained that Kaplan was the first company they had incented. They had provided them with state, county, and City incentives. Mr. Hicks was unsure if the incentive would be in the form of cash or in the form of waiving permits, but it would amount to \$33,000 per year over the course of the next ten years, over the course of Kaplan's lease.

Mr. Hicks stated that the permit process review committee, consisting of himself, Valerie Bohlander, Director of the Building Department, Kirk Buffington, Director of Procurement, Averill Dorsett, the Director of Human Resources, and Assistant City Manager Steven Scott, had received three replies to their RFP. They would meet again on Thursday to narrow the field and determine who would give presentations at the beginning of the year. He explained that the process involved allowing developers to use a private entity to secure City permits. He agreed to provide the Board with the scope of the proposal and the RFP for them to examine.

Mr. Schiavone felt they must develop a disaster relief plan in place as soon as possible. He felt they should find a city that already had a plan they could use for a model. Mr. Schiavone thought that development of this plan would make them stand out nationally as a City that had its act together. Mr. Schiavone felt it was very important for the personality of Fort Lauderdale to be developed.

Mr. Burrington said he had come here to help Fort Lauderdale become a model mid-sized city. He wanted to attract small to mid-sized American, European and Canadian firms that would bring more jobs and add to the ambiance of the City.

Ms. Louis said the budget had not been available for marketing the City. She felt they needed to develop an "aha factor" that would attract people to Fort Lauderdale. Mr. Hicks felt all assets should be pooled for marketing purposes.

Mr. Budwig felt they must develop a new branding image, a new logo, and a new tagline to match what the City would soon become. Mr. Burrington felt there was a constant tension between Broward County and Fort Lauderdale in terms of branding. He thought a special committee could be created to handle this issue.

Chair DuMont informed the Board that Mr. Budwig had recently designed a new logo for the Chamber of commerce that she felt would do wonderful things for the chamber.

Mr. Neimark felt they must develop and then work a plan and suggested a workshop to accomplish this. He felt they had a unique opportunity to define the world's perception of Fort Lauderdale and make it an international destination and an ideal small city.

Mr. Boyd felt that streetscaping and its maintenance were very important issues. He also questioned the appropriateness of the new gateway products on I-95. He noted that the median on Las Olas needed a lot of work as well. Mr. Boyd thought that panhandling was a huge nuisance in certain areas. Mr. Hicks informed the board that they were already looking into taking care of the unsightly newspaper stands.

Chair DuMont wondered how they could hope to attract international visitors with no international signage. Mr. LaMattina said he would consider this in conjunction with the streetscape project.

Ms. Louis reminded the Board of the Economic Development Summit that had taken place a few years ago and wanted to use the input and plan from this to help now. Mr. Neimark agreed they could use this as a framework.

Mr. Hicks asked the Board to communicate to him any specific issues they felt must be addressed.

Chair DuMont noted that the City had made many promises to the northwest area that had never been delivered and this should be very prominent on their radar. Mr. Hicks felt that this area would take off under CRA Director Al Battle's direction. He agreed to bring him to the next meeting with a report.

Ms. Louis felt there must be a centralized plan and phone contact number to handle inquiries by people who were considering moving to the City.

The Board discussed possible dates and times to meet for a workshop session for a couple of hours within the next few weeks. They decided to communicate via email for possible meeting dates.

**IX. Old/New Business (Proposed meeting dates)**

Chair DuMont said they would consult with the Board rules for the meeting dates.

**X. Election of EDAB Chair and Vice Chair**

Chair DuMont asked if the Board would like to elect a new Chair and Vice Chair for the remainder of 2005 and then hold elections in January for the 2006 Board year. The Board preferred to keep Chair DuMont and Vice Chair Louis through December.

**Motion** made by Mr. Schiavone and seconded by Mr. Burrington to retain Chair DuMont and Vice Chair Louis through the end of the year. Board unanimously approved.

**XI. Adjourn**

Thereupon the meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m.